










Audubon at Home Top 10 Native Plant Lists – Groundcovers

Name	Image	Features, Size	Wildlife Value	Moisture, pH, Sunlight	Habitat/Other Notes
<p>Christmas Fern (<i>Polystichum acrostichoides</i>)</p>	 <p style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">Sally & Andy Wasowski, Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center</p>	<p>Green foliage through winter</p> <p>Easy to establish under proper growing conditions</p> <p>Clumping growth habit</p> <p>½ -- 2 ft.</p>	<p>Low cover for small animals</p>	<p>Moist, well-drained soil in cool location</p> <p>pH –acid to neutral</p> <p>Part to full shade</p>	<p>Woods, rocky slopes, thickets</p> <hr/> <p>Other evergreen choices include: evergreen wood-fern (<i>Dryopteris intermedia</i>); marginal wood-fern (<i>D. marginalis</i>); and rock polypody (<i>Polypodium virginianum</i>).</p>
<p>Pennsylvania Sedge (<i>Carex pennsylvanica</i>)</p>	 <p style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">Stefan Bloodworth, Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center</p>	<p>Clumping growth habit, spreads through rhizomes</p> <p>Turf-forming, can be used as lawn alternative</p> <p>½ -- 1½ ft.</p>	<p>Seeds, low cover</p>	<p>Dry to moist soil</p> <p>Part sun to full shade</p>	<p>Open dry woods, wooded slopes</p> <hr/> <p>Also consider blue wood sedge (<i>C. glaucoidea</i>)</p>
<p>Wild Ginger (<i>Asarum canadense</i>)</p>	 <p style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">Doug Sherman, Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center</p>	<p>Forms low, dense groundcover</p> <p>Attractive foliage, semi-evergreen</p> <p>Unusual brown flower under leaves</p> <p>½ ft.</p>	<p>Caterpillar host, low cover</p>	<p>Moist soil</p> <p>pH – neutral</p> <p>Part to full shade</p>	<p>Rich woods</p>

<p>Green and Gold (<i>Chrysogonum virginianum</i>)</p>	 <p>Albert F.W. Vick, Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center</p>	<p>Yellow flowers, spring to early summer</p> <p>Adaptable, requires little care</p> <p>½ -- 1 ft.</p>	<p>Nectar and pollen source, low cover</p>	<p>Dry to moist soil</p> <p>pH – neutral to acid</p> <p>Full sun to full shade</p>	<p>Open woods</p>
<p>Wild Geranium (<i>Geranium maculatum</i>)</p> <p>AKA: wood geranium, cranesbill, spotted geranium</p>	 <p>Mrs. W.D. Bransford, Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center</p>	<p>Showy lavender to pink flowers, spring – mid-summer</p> <p>Spreads by rhizomes, but not aggressive</p> <p>Adaptable, deer resistant</p> <p>1 – 2 ft.</p>	<p>Nectar and pollen source, seeds, low cover</p>	<p>Rich, dry to moist soil</p> <p>pH – neutral to acid</p> <p>Full to part sun</p>	<p>Woods, fields, roadsides</p>
<p>Threadleaf Coreopsis (<i>Coreopsis verticillata</i>)</p>	 <p>Thomas L. Muller, Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center</p>	<p>Showy yellow flowers early summer to mid-fall</p> <p>Drought tolerant</p>	<p>Pollen and nectar source, seeds, low cover</p>	<p>Dry to moist soil</p> <p>pH – acid</p> <p>Full sun to part shade</p>	<p>Dry open woods, roadsides, clearings, wood edges</p>

<p>Wood Sorrel (<i>Oxalis violacea</i>)</p>	 <p>Steven Faucette, Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center</p>	<p>Showy violet flower, spring to mid-summer</p> <p>Interesting clover-like foliage</p> <p>½ ft.</p>	<p>Seeds, pollen and nectar source</p>	<p>Dry to moist, rich soil</p> <p>Part to full shade</p>	<p>Woods</p>
<p>Creeping Phlox (<i>Phlox stolonifera</i>)</p>	 <p>Campbell & Lynn Loughmiller, Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center</p>	<p>Blue, red-purple, violet flowers, spring to early summer</p> <p>Mat-forming, semi-evergreen foliage</p> <p>Can be aggressive</p> <p>½ -- 1½ ft.</p>	<p>Nectar and pollen source, low cover</p>	<p>Dry to moist, rich soil</p> <p>Part sun to full sun</p>	<p>Rocky ledges, slopes, crevices, clearings</p> <hr/> <p>For sunnier, drier sites, consider moss phlox (<i>Phlox subulata</i>)</p>
<p>Wintergreen (<i>Gaultheria procumbens</i>)</p> <p>AKA: checkerberry</p>	 <p>Bennie Bengston, Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center</p>	<p>Small, white to pink, bell-shaped flowers, late-spring to late-summer</p> <p>Red berry, mid-summer to spring</p> <p>Evergreen foliage; forms dense mats</p> <p>½ ft.</p>	<p>Fruit, seeds, pollen and nectar source, low cover</p>	<p>Dry to moist soil</p> <p>pH – strongly to mildly acid</p> <p>Part to full shade</p>	<p>Conifer/oak woods, rocky slopes, sandy woods, bog hummocks</p> <hr/> <p>Also consider partridgeberry (<i>Mitchella repens</i>)</p>

Virginia Creeper
(*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*)



Ted Bodner @ USDA-NRCS PLANTS Database / James H. Miller and Karl V.. 2005. *Forest plants of the southeast and their wildlife uses*. University of Georgia Press., Athens.

Climbing vine that can be trimmed as a groundcover

Attractive five-parted foliage turns crimson to purple in fall

Blue-black berry, fall through winter

25 – 35 ft. spread

Fruits, low cover

Dry to wet soils

pH – acid to somewhat alkaline

Woods, wood edges, cliffs, fence rows

Sources:

Bringing Nature Home: How You Can Sustain Wildlife with Native Plants, Douglas W. Tallamy, Timber Press, 2010

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Native Plants for Wildlife Habitat and Conservation Landscaping: Chesapeake Bay Watershed, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2003, <http://www.nps.gov/plants/pubs/chesapeake/toc.htm>

Native Species Planting Guide for New York and Vicinity, Danielle Luttenberg, Deborah Lev, Michael Feller, Natural Resources Group, City of New York Parks & Recreation, 1993

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Wild Urban Plants of the Northeast: A Field Guide, Peter del Tredici, Comstock Associates, 2010